

NEAR EASTERN ARCHAEOLOGY

VOL. 70 • NO. 1 • MARCH 2007

A PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOLS OF ORIENTAL RESEARCH



Photography and the American Contribution
to Early "Biblical" Archaeology

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Throne Villages of the Highlands

From the Editor

With the departure of Sandra Scham after four years as editor of *Near Eastern Archaeology*, we are entering a transitional year during which, Jeff Blakely, Ann Killebrew, and Andy Vaughn will serve as interim co-editors. We will serve in this capacity for one year while ASOR and its Committee on Publications seek a new editor. During our tenure we will be working to get the journal caught up so that it appears on schedule again.

The next year is also one in which ASOR, its Committee on Publications, and the *Near Eastern Archaeology* editorial board will be examining the mission of this journal. What archaeological periods should be of most concern to the journal? Which regions should receive the most coverage? At what level (or to what audience) should we aim the journal? Each of these questions has an impact on the content, appearance, and use or function of the journal. The editors would greatly appreciate any thoughts or suggestions you may have. Please contact any of us: Jeff Blakely (jblakely@wisc.edu), Ann Killebrew (aek11@psu.edu), or Andy Vaughn (asored@bu.edu).

We hope that you enjoy this, our first, issue. We look forward to serving as your editors for the coming year.

Jeff Blakely
Interim Co-Editor

NEAR EASTERN ARCHAEOLOGY

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and Andy Vaughn

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Near Eastern Archaeology (ISSN 1094-2076) is published quarterly (March, June, September, December) by the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR), 656 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02215-2010.

Printed by Cadmus Journal Services, Baltimore, MD.

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It may be the case that segregation of elite and non-elite neighborhoods was a feature of late-third millennium urban residential patterns, and that more integrated distributions, with different social groups living in the same neighborhoods, were more typical at urban centers of the early-second millennium, such as Ur and Mashkan-shapir. To demonstrate this, further large-scale excavations of residential areas of third- and second-millennium sites are required, along with the adoption of a consistent method for assessing social differentiation.

The next step in the Titriş project will be to determine whether or not these patterns in domestic activities extend across larger, unexcavated areas. Besides the large-scale excavations, we conducted extensive magnetometry surveys, successfully imaging the unexcavated house plans and street systems for much of the remainder of the late-phase residential quarters at Titriş. The magnetometry results covered 16.6 hectares of a total site size of 35 hectares, setting up a perfect opportunity to extend the area of investigation. The consistent patterns in the domestic activities, seen in two opposing sectors of the site, likely attest to cultural conventions prevalent among the non-elite urban dwellers at this site. If the excavated areas can be shown to be part of much larger, recurring architectural patterns in the lower city, then the internal spatial configuration within the excavated houses may be taken as representative of the city more generally. Therefore, the reconstruction of domestic activities derived from excavation data may be projected onto the unexcavated house plans derived through magnetometry survey. The combination of the excavated data and surveyed results, as well as the investigation of possible locations for public buildings, will ultimately allow the excavators to establish a general model for third-millennium urban centers in northern Mesopotamia.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the directors of the Titriş excavations, Guillermo Algaze and Timothy Matney. Funding in support of my two seasons of summer field research was provided by UCLA Friends of Archaeology.

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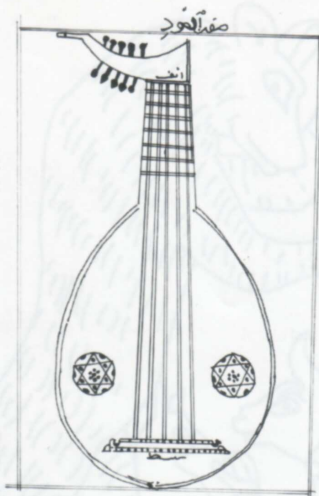
Commentary on the New Incised Scapula from Tel Kinrot

Marom, Bar-Oz, and Mûnger have sufficiently introduced the incised scapula found at Tel Kinrot in Israel in a recent issue of *NEA* (vol. 69 [2006:37–40]), and I will not repeat what they have already said regarding parallels, its peripheric circumstances, and related literature. I will, however, dispute here their assumptions regarding the function for the scapular implement on grounds of organology and iconography.

The item is made from the edge of the vertebral border of a scapula identified by the authors as originating from a fallow deer. Its length, said to be seventy-nine millimeters long, is disputable since both extremities are worn and cannot provide accurate measurements. What matters is the distance from the first to the last incision and the spacing between them, as well as the general morphology of the item. Furthermore, the premise of Marom, Bar-Oz, and Mûnger that this was the nut or the bridge of a lute must be rejected on crucial grounds that in the ancient Near East there is no iconographic or textual evidence of any lute fitted with more than three, or possibly four strings (Dumbrill 2005:96–110, 305–44). However, the morphology of the item, its size, the material of which it is made, and the number of incisions with which it is grooved do make it believable that it could have belonged to a stringed instrument. Because it could not belong to a lute, or even to a harp since harps have neither bridges nor nuts, all clues suggest that the implement would have been the bridge of a lyre and there is ample iconography to encourage such a conclusion (Dumbrill 2005:226–303).

The authors have argued that because the incisions on the bone run parallel, the strings would also run parallel to each other. However, this argument is not valid because the length of the incision is too small for preventing strings from spreading, in a fan disposition, from the bridge towards the yoke. The bridge would have secured the strings sufficiently in its grooves, avoiding their running into each other when oscillating as a consequence of plucking. Should the item be the bridge of a lyre, it would constitute the only known exemplar in the organology of the Iron Age Levant.

We have to wait centuries for more strings to appear. The Arabic name for the bridge of a lute, and probably for other



Oldest known depiction of an Arabian lute. From MS Marsh 521

instruments is *mušṭ*, which appears to stem from Assyrian *mušṭu*. The first attestation of a fifth string is accredited, in the ninth century CE, to Ziryāb, whose full name was Abū Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Nāfi (Farmer 1929:128–30). The illustration given here is the author's drawing from manuscript March 521, Uri mxxvi. 4° from the Bodleian Library in Oxford, which dates to approximately 1200 CE. The work in which the original illustration appears is entitled "Book of Music by the Šaiḥ al-Raʿīs Abū ʿAlī ibn Sīnā . . . from the Kitāb al-Najāt." This is Avicenna's famous treatise written in the eleventh century CE. The instrument has five double strings, which were tuned to the same pitch. The bridge was glued to the soundboard and the strings were tied to it.

Richard J. Dumbrill
The British Museum

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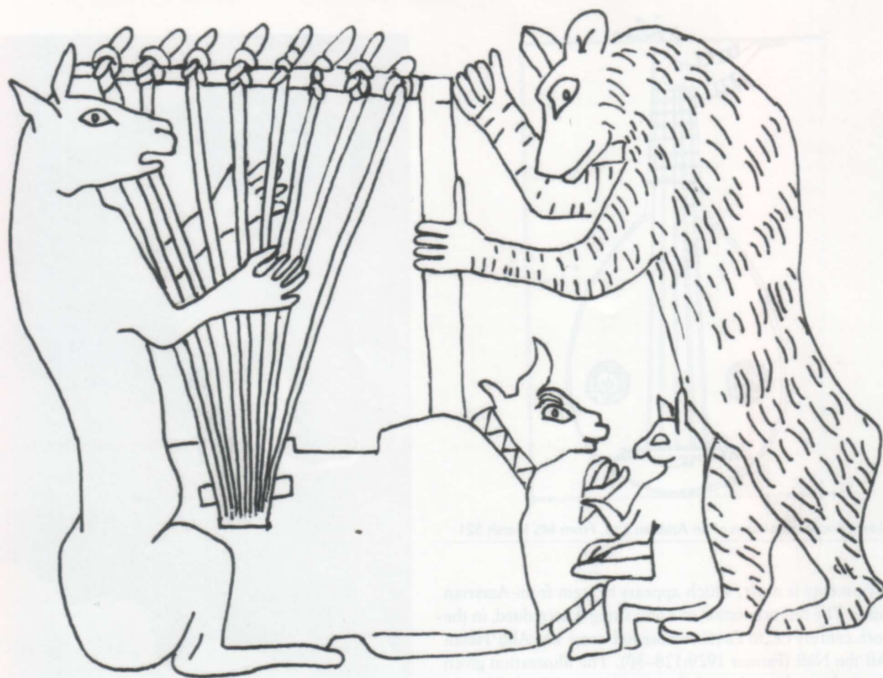
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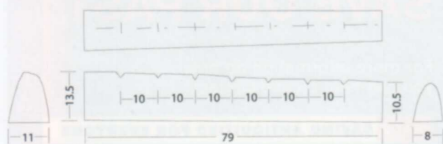
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Sumerian lyre with floating bridge, ca. 2500 BCE. From Dumbrill (2005).



Anatolian lyres with bridges, 1500–1000 BCE. From Dumbrill (2005).



Tentative reconstruction from the photograph of the modified scapula. All measurements are in millimeters.